

The Learning Support Department Overview

The department is situated in the Overpool building.

Staffing:

For an overview of the Learning Support department structure, please see appendix (i)

Mr Davies, the SENDCO has significant experience in this role and has worked as a teacher in mainstream and specialist provision for over 20 years. This is a full-time, non-teaching position, allowing for a comprehensive management of SEND provision.

We have a Quiet Room (D3), supervised by a trained member of staff (Mrs Whittle), and a teaching room (D2) within the learning support department.

We have a team of 14 teaching assistants, led by a Teaching Assistant (TA) Manager (Mrs Maddocks) who is responsible for the deployment and training of the TA's and coordinating interventions.

The department has four scale 6 TA's who have departmental specialism. They are:

Kate Roberts – English

Helen Clare – Humanities

James Thompson – Mathematics

Jill Dean – Modern Foreign Languages

Jess Burrows – Science

We also have staff expertise in the following areas:

Sue Harvey – specialist SEND teacher and qualified assessor

Amy Whittle (Family Support Worker) - specialist assessor for access arrangements and ASC Intervention Lead.

Lesley Arathoon - SEND administration, specialist Irlens assessor, HI and VI coordinator.

In the last academic year, staff have been trained in ELKAN based Speech and Language, Multi-agency working, ASC Support in Mainstream Education, Effective Deployment of Teaching Assistants, Irlen's Screening and Emotional Literacy support (ELSA). We are committed to the regular training and development of all staff in the department.

Our approach to identifying and meeting the needs of students with SEND

We will assess each student's current skills and levels of attainment on entry, which will build on information from previous settings and Key Stages, where appropriate. We have a systematic and extensive transition programme which involves the Learning Support Department working closely with feeder school SENDCO's and parents several months in advance of entry of Year 7 students.

Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all the students in their class. Therefore, high quality teaching is our first step in responding to students who have

additional needs. This will be differentiated for individual students and the SENDCO will help provide support and guidance for teaching staff with this task. In addition, staff are provided with guidelines on the schools intranet (Learning Support area) in meeting specific learning needs like ASC and ADHD.

For an overview of how the department identifies SEND, see appendix (ii)

Interventions

We provide the following interventions at Stage 2 and Stage 3 of the process for identifying and meeting SEND:

- Social communication group (Link) - delivered by Mrs Whittle
- Lexia literacy intervention – delivered by Mrs Roberts and Mr Phillips
- PiXL Code for Year 7 students with additional literacy needs – delivered by Mrs Harvey
- Emotional Literacy support delivered by trained staff – delivered by Mrs Igoe and Mrs Rivers
- Tailored Speech and Language programmes delivered by ELKLAN trained staff – delivered by Mrs Clare and Mrs Roberts
- Typing and Keyboard Skills – delivered by Mrs Harvey
- Review/preview sessions to support overlearning – delivered by Mrs Roberts

These interventions are delivered to students in the Learning Support Department. The persons named above (Intervention leads), are trained and qualified to deliver the interventions which are coordinated by Mrs Maddocks (TA manager).

Evaluating the effectiveness of SEND provision

The SENDCO reports to the Governing Body (termly report) on improving outcomes of students with SEND and the Learning Support department is part of the whole school self-review processes.

We evaluate the effectiveness of provision for students with SEND by:

- Reviewing students' individual progress towards their goals each term
- Reviewing the impact of interventions after each term (SENDCO and Intervention leads)
- Holding annual reviews for students with EHC plans and Top Up funding

Other types of support and intervention

The subject specific TA's (see staffing above) provide support for all students, as well as those with SEND. They are also responsible for monitoring the progress of students with SEND as well as providing support, advice and guidance for teachers and the Senior Curriculum Leader in their respective departments.

A number of teaching assistants also work in mainstream classes to support students. A student who is identified with a high level of need will be allocated a teaching assistant to be a key worker who will monitor day-to-day issues and liaise with home when necessary.

We also provide an afterschool Homework club, for students who need help from staff to complete their homework.

Vulnerable students

Our aim is to make sure that all students regardless of ability access all mainstream lessons, daily routines and extra-curricular activities. We aim to promote independence and a resilience to overcome any difficulties. However, some students will from time to time need additional support. We therefore provide the following support for these students:

- The Quiet room. This is a place which has been specifically designed to help students who have social & communication needs such as ASC, come out of a high anxiety or 'meltdown' state.
- A safe space room. This is currently being developed as part of our whole school initiative to become an Attachment Friendly School and aims to provide a safe space where students with attachment difficulties and those who may undergo high anxiety states can benefit from time and support outside the classroom.
- Early morning entry, break and lunchtime in Learning Support. This provides supervised time for identified students who find it difficult to integrate with peers at these times.
- A supervised area in the dinner hall at lunchtime. This is the provision of a specific seating area in the dinner hall for students who may find it difficult eating and engaging with peers. They can access support from staff should they need it.

Enabling students with SEND to engage in activities available to those in the school who do not have SEND

All of our extra-curricular activities and school visits are available to all our students, including our before-and after-school clubs.

All students are encouraged to go on our residential trip(s) to Menai in Anglesey.

All students are encouraged to take part in sports day/ school performances/ special workshops, etc. No student is ever excluded from taking part in these activities because of their SEND

Additional support

We have developed informal links with parents through meetings (during transition from year 6 to year 7) and through coffee mornings for parents so they can meet the learning support staff and develop a supportive links with the adults directly involved with supporting their children.

We also work with the following agencies to provide support for students with SEND:

- Cheshire West and Chester SEND team
- Speech and Language Team
- Cheshire West and Chester Autism Service
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)
- Educational Psychologist Service
- Paediatric Team
- Occupational Therapy Services
- Young People's Service

The department has a Family Support Worker (Amy Whittle), who works closely with Pastoral Managers and external agencies to support a coordinated approach for families requiring multi-agency support.